CENTRAL AND NORTH AUSTRALIA RAILWAYS

The Alice Springs passenger train — popularly known as the "Ghan" — near Alice Springs.

CENTRAL AUSTRALIA RAILWAY PASSENGER SERVICE

For travel to or from Australia's red centre, rather than mere transportation, the Central Australia Railway passenger service is unsurpassed. Comfortable accommodation, full air-conditioning, excellent dining car and liquor service, and courteous and able staff to attend to your comfort all contribute to your well-being. You can relax in your cabin or the lounge car or mingle with your fellow passengers to enjoy the social life of the train.

Through the generously proportioned picture windows of the train you can observe a large slice of the lesser known part of Australia. From the Flinders Range, through the gibber plains, the salt lakes, over the Finke River, and through the spinifex and mulga country, until the train passes through Heavitree Gap in the Macdonnell Ranges, there is a most unusual variety of scenery to attract your interest and rich colours to delight your eye.

Travel during the winter months in the golden sunshine of the inland is the most popular, but whatever the season, you travel relaxed and arrive refreshed.

Passengers travelling by rail between Adelaide and Alice Springs transfer from or to the broad gauge South Australian Railways train to or from a standard gauge Commonwealth Railways train at Port Pirie. The standard gauge train runs between Port Pirie and Marree direct, but passengers from or to Port Augusta travel by a separate service which is attached to or detached from the through train at Stirling North. In both cases accommodation for passengers is provided in airconditioned sitting cars. A dining car service is available to all passengers.

Between Stirling North and Marree passengers travel over the standard gauge line which was opened for traffic in 1957 and replaced the narrow gauge route through Quorn and Hawker, east of the Flinders Range.

Marree is the station where passengers transfer between standard gauge and narrow gauge trains. The narrow gauge passenger service between Marree and Alice Springs provides both first and second class sleeping berth accommodation, first and second class lounge cars and a dining car service.

FACILITIES AND AMENITIES:

The train is airconditioned throughout to maintain an even, comfortable temperature and all cars have double-glazed sealed windows. Individual reading lights are provided over all seats and in each compartment a three-pin (240 volt) power point is available for electric razors etc. Electric irons and ironing boards are available on request. Portable bassinettes are provided and can be obtained from the Car Conductor for babies in arms. Writing paper and envelopes are also available from the Conductor. An iced water drinking font is provided in each car and a thermos flask in each first class cabin. Tape recorded music is relayed to all compartments and lounges and the speakers in each compartment have individual controls. Cigarettes, confectionery, aerated waters, playing cards, post cards, novels and magazines, souvenirs and the Commonwealth Railways Map of Australia may be purchased from a Conductor who traverses the train or from waiters in the dining car.

Showers: Hot and cold water showers are provided in each car. These should be operated in accordance with the instructions displayed in the shower-room.

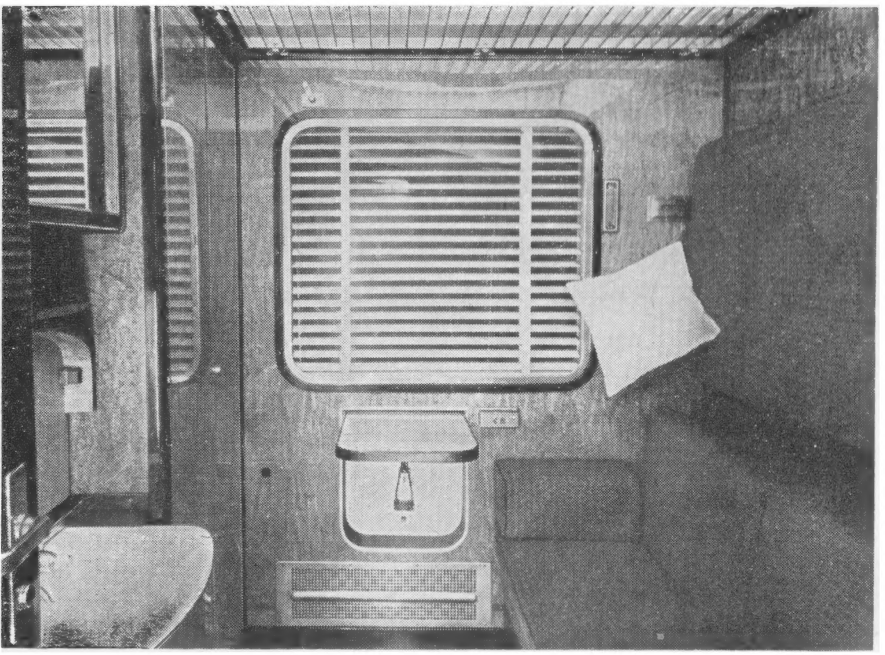
ACCOMMODATION

SLEEPING CARS:

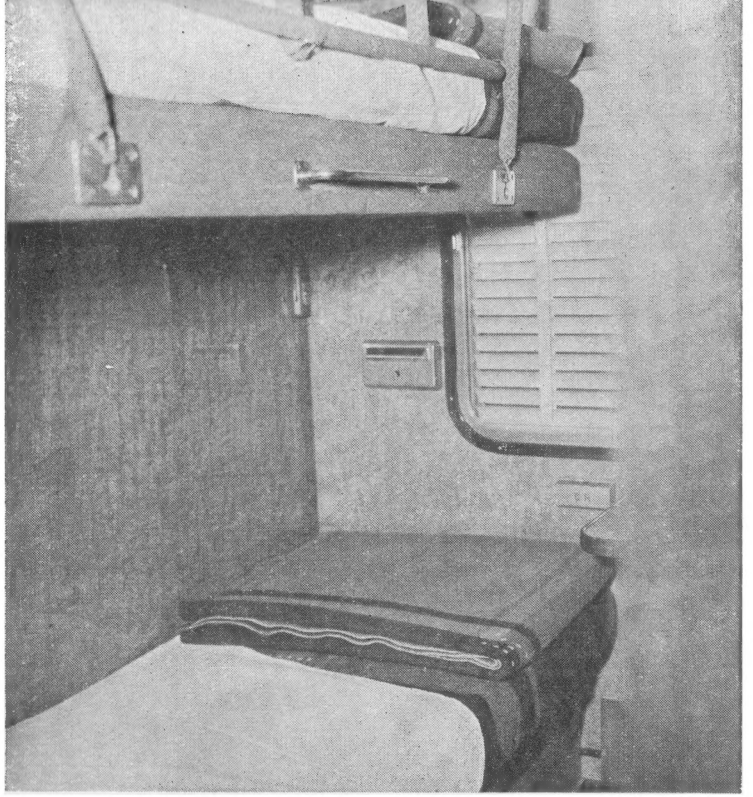
First class sleeping cars each accommodate either twenty passengers in two berth compartments or eighteen passengers in single berth compartments.

Second class sleeping cars have four berth sleeping compartments.

All compartments are fitted with washbasins, with hot and cold water service. Spacious wardrobe and luggage accommodation is provided.



First class two berth sleeping compartment made up for day use.



First class two berth sleeping compartment made up for night use.

NOTE: At peak periods, it is sometimes necessary to operate non-airconditioned accommodation on Central Australia Railway passenger trains. Intending passengers can ascertain at the time of booking the type of accommodation allotted.

Hot water is not provided in the older type cars, but cold showers are available. It is not possible to use electric razors or electric irons in these cars.

DINING CAR:

The dining saloon seats 40 passengers, the seats being arranged four to each table. The kitchen is equipped for the preparation of high class meals.

Luncheon and Dinner meals are generally served in three sittings in the dining car.

On boarding the train passengers will be handed a meal coupon advising the allotted sitting for meals in the dining car.

Coupons should be retained by passengers and be available for sitting identification, if requested by the staff in the dining car prior to the commencement of a meal.

A meal call will be made throughout the train five minutes before each sitting is due to commence.

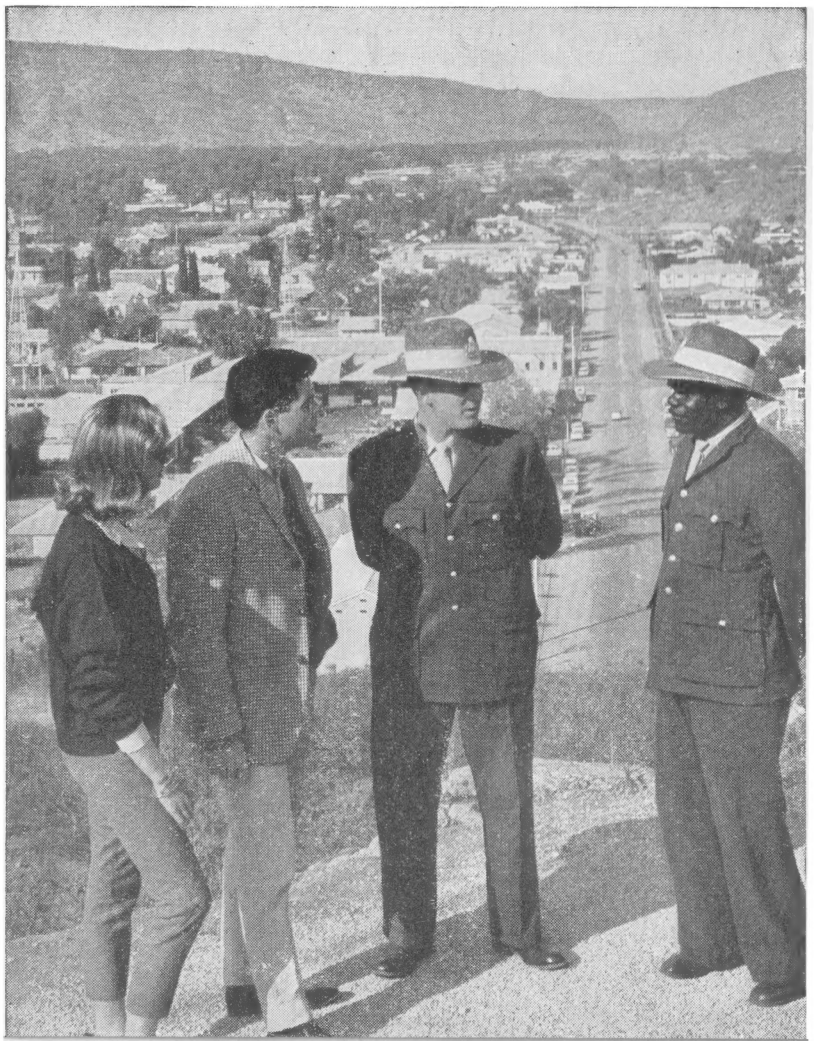
LIQUOR SERVICE:

Liquor is available from waiters in the dining car during the day and also during meals.

LOUNGE CAR:

The first class lounge car is the social centre of the train. It is divided into three sections — a smoking compartment, a large centre music saloon containing piano and radiogram, and a ladies' lounge. Lounge accommodation for second class passengers is provided in a composite lounge-sleeping car.

TOURIST ATTRACTIONS



Central Australia, with its variety of unique scenic attractions and perfect winter climate, is one of Australia's most popular tourist resorts. To the traveller in search of unique and primitive scenes, or seeking the quiet grandeur and invigorating air of inland Australia, this territory has a most fascinating appeal.

Alice Springs, the terminus of the Central Australia Railway and focal point of all tourist activities, is situated in the Macdonnell Ranges, 2,000 feet above sea level. The climate is ideal during the months of May, June, July, and August.

From Alice Springs, unrivalled beauty spots are within easy reach.

Regular day trips are run by tourist organisations to the nearer attractions such as Standley Chasm, Simpson's Gap, Emily Gap and Trephina Gorge. Longer tours take in the more distant tourist features, including Ayers Rock, Mt. Olga, Palm Valley, Ormiston Gorge. Special tours are operated to the magnificent King's Canyon.

Many of these places can be reached by private motor vehicle.

Left: Alice Springs from Anzac Hill.

Above: Glen Helen Gorge.

Above right: The Finke River in Ormiston Gorge.

Right: River gums at the Ross River.

(Photos: Douglass Baglin)

TOURIST ATTRACTIONS

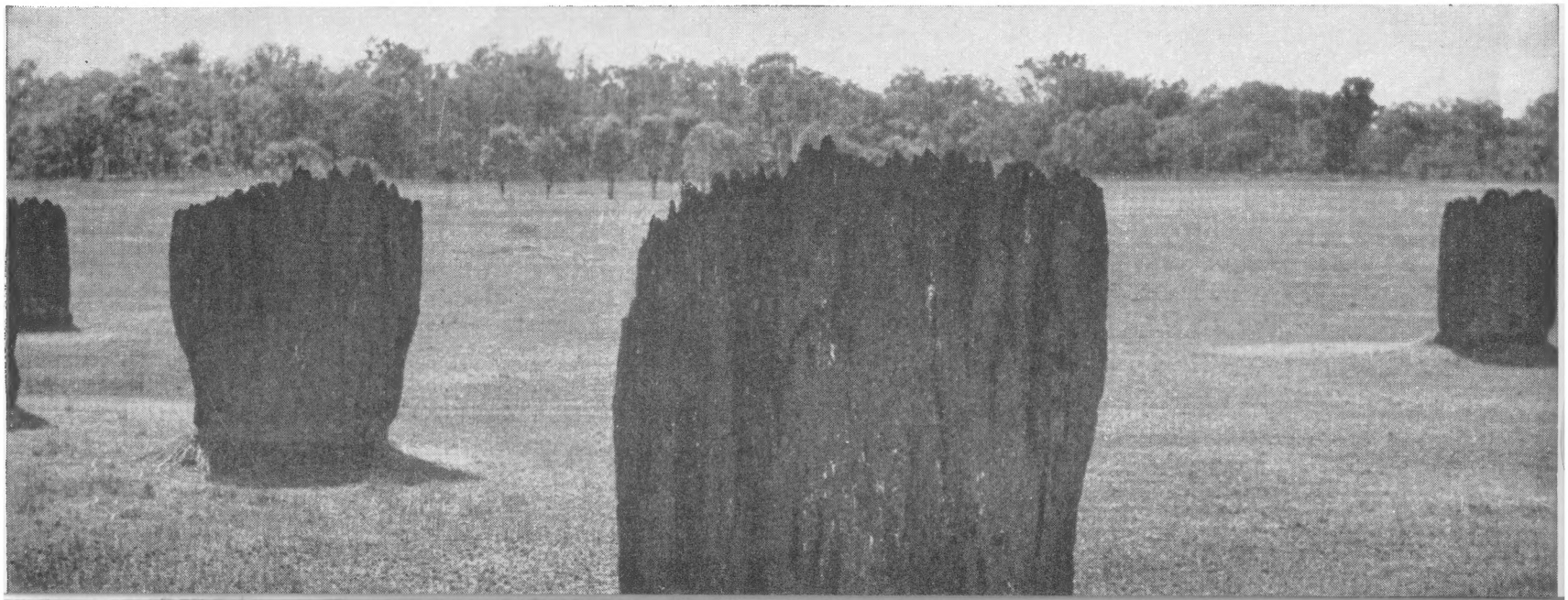
In the areas north of the Alice Springs district there are also many unique attractions for the tourist. Ideal camping weather between April and September and the growth in popularity of caravanning has assisted in making this country known to an ever increasing number of tourists.

Darwin, the capital of the Northern Territory, has a population of over 16,000. It is a modern thriving city.

Easily accessible from Darwin are Howard and Berry Springs, Manton Dam (the source of Darwin's water supply) and Robin Falls. Full details of scenic attractions in the Northern Territory are available on application to the Northern Territory Tourist Board.

Sportsmen will find in the Territory fishing and shooting comparable with the most exciting in Australia. Kangaroo shooting in the vicinity of the Stuart Highway provides plenty of thrills; geese and duck are plentiful, and there is a liberal open season. Crocodile shooting can be arranged and buffalo may be shot under licence.

In the north, river, sea and light game fishing provide a fisherman's paradise. Varieties include barramundi, kingfish, schnapper, bream, barracuda, whiting, flathead and garfish.



Far Left: Magnetic ant-hills near Darwin. The long axes of the slabs lie north and south.

Left: Darwin from the air.

MAIN RAILWAYS OF AUSTRALIA

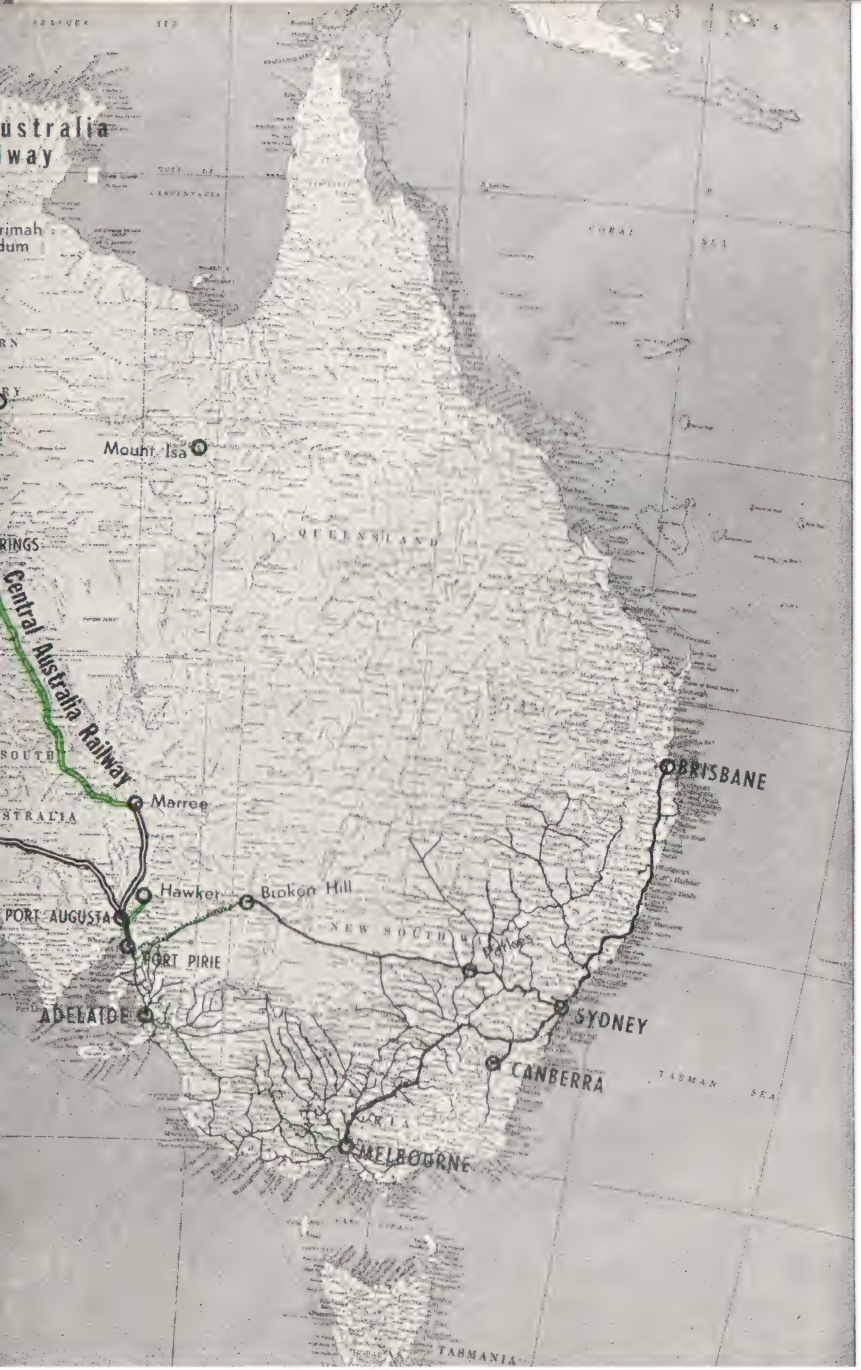
The through links between the Mainland States of Australia are shown by the heavy lines on the map, thus:—

- - - - - - - - -	5′ 3″ gauge
———————	4′ 8½″ gauge
— — — — — — —	4′ 8½″ gauge under construction
———————	3′ 6″ gauge

Road Freight Services Co-ordinated with Commonwealth Railways

Commonwealth Railways are indicated by double lines showing the appropriate gauge.

A larger copy of the Commonwealth Railways Map of Australia showing the different gauges of the railway systems is available at a cost of 30c per copy. The map may be obtained from the Secretary, Commonwealth Railways, 325 Collins Street, Melbourne, 3000, or on Trans-Australian or Central Australia trains.



COMMONWEALTH RAILWAYS

The Commonwealth Railways are administered by the Commonwealth Railways Commissioner under powers conferred on him by the Commonwealth Railways Act 1917-66. Administrative headquarters are in Melbourne and the main operating centres and workshops are at Port Augusta, in South Australia, and Darwin, in the Northern Territory. The Railways operated are as follows:—

Railway	Gauge	Length	
	ft. in.	m. ch.	m. ch.
Trans-Australian—			
(Port Pirie Junction to Kalgoorlie)	4 8½	—	1,108 16
Central Australia—			
(Stirling North to Hawker)	3 6	61 01	—
(Stirling North to Marree)	4 8½	217 15	—
(Marree to Alice Springs)	3 6	539 79	818 15
North Australia—			
(Darwin to Birdum)	3 6	—	316 40
(Effective railhead — Larrimah)			
Australian Capital Territory—			
(Queanbeyan to Canberra)	4 8½	—	4 75
Total		—	2.247 66

HISTORICAL NOTES ON CENTRAL AND NORTH AUSTRALIA RAILWAYS

The Central Australia and North Australia Railways, as they are known now, began when South Australia controlled the Northern Territory. These railways, extending from Port Augusta to Oodnadatta and from Darwin to Pine Creek, were transferred to the Commonwealth on 1st January, 1911, under the terms of the Northern Territory Acceptance Act 1910.

The South Australian Railways worked the Port Augusta-Oodnadatta railway for the Commonwealth until 1st January, 1926, when the Commonwealth Railways assumed full responsibility and introduced its own locomotives and rollingstock.

The Darwin to Pine Creek Railway — extended to Emungalan in 1917 — was operated by the Department of External Affairs from 1st January, 1911, to 30th June, 1918, when the Commonwealth Railways Commissioner took control. It has been operated as a part of the Commonwealth Railways System ever since.

Central Australia Railway:

The 3′ 6″ gauge Central Australia Railway was designed having regard to the limited traffic expected. From Port Augusta, the most northerly port of South Australia, the railway crossed the Flinders Range to Quorn — 24 miles — then ran east of the range on the Willochra plain before again crossing the range to Hawker — 65 miles. Northward of Hawker the railway route, after the Mern Merna Pass, ran generally parallel with the range, which it entered again near Parachilna. It traversed hilly country to Beltana and Copley and then descended the northern slopes of the Flinders Range to enter the Lake Eyre basin and the more arid and flat country extending north to Marree and Oodnadatta.

South Australia had the railway between Port Augusta and Marree built by contract. Messrs. Barry, Brooks & Fraser built the sections Port Augusta to Hawker — 65 miles — opened for traffic on June 28, 1880; Hawker to Beltana — 79 miles — opened on July 1, 1881; and Beltana to Government Gums — 55 miles — opened on May 22, 1882. Government Gums is now known as Farina.

The fourth extension of the railway of 33 miles from Farina to Hergott Springs was built by the contractors, Moorehouse, Robinson & Jesser. This section was opened on February 7, 1884. The name of Hergott Springs was altered to Marree, the original native name for the district, when all place names with a German flavour were changed during the 1914-18 War.

Marree is one of the hottest places in Australia and is the nearest station on the Central Australia Railway to South Western Queensland. Large numbers of cattle travelling over the Birdsville track are loaded at Marree, for conveyance by rail to Adelaide markets. In the early days, Afghans comprised half the population of Marree.

North of Marree railway construction was carried out by day labour as an unemployment relief measure. The section Marree to William Creek was opened on June 1, 1889. William Creek to Warrina on November 1, 1889, and Warrina to Oodnadatta on January 7, 1891. At that time the railhead was 688 miles from Adelaide and 477 miles from the seaboard terminus of the line at Port Augusta.

After the opening of the railway to Oodnadatta a series of bad seasons was experienced in South Australia and the State did not proceed with construction.

In 1896, offers were made to the South Australian Government on behalf of various syndicates to construct a line connecting Oodnadatta with the then North Australia Railway terminus at Pine Creek. However, the Government at that time was not prepared to recommend the acceptance of any offer based upon the land grant system. Then, in 1902, the Transcontinental Railway Act was passed and tenders were invited by the Government for the construction of 1,063 miles of three feet six inch gauge railway on the land grant system. A bonus was offered to the contractors of a grant of 79,725,000 acres of land in fee simple. Tenderers were to make a deposit of £10,000 and be prepared to: (a) construct the railway to the satisfaction of the Engineer-in-Chief, on the three feet six inch gauge, the rails to be of steel and of not less than 60 pounds per yard, (b) complete the work in eight years, the minimum length of line to be constructed in any one year being one hundred miles, (c) provide and always maintain a train service for goods and passengers at least once a week from each terminus, with a minimum speed of twenty miles per hour and (d) deposit £50,000 which was to be absolutely forfeited if default was made in any of the conditions of the contract. A contract to build the railway was brought to signing point but negotiations finally broke down owing mainly to difficulties over Federal restrictions on the employment of coloured labour.

Two 1,750 h.p. diesel-electric locomotives haul a coal train on the Stirling North-Marree Railway from the Leigh Creek coalfield to the Port Augusta power station. This train consisting of 80 bogie wagons, is three-quarters of a mile long and has a gross weight of 5,630 tons.

It was not until the railway passed to Commonwealth control that extension beyond Oodnadatta began. On December 23, 1928, the extension to Rumbalara — 171 miles — was opened, and the section to Alice Springs was opened on August 2, 1929.

Standard Gauge Railway to Marree: The construction of a power house at Port Augusta and the development of the Leigh Creek coalfield to provide its fuel supplies put heavy pressure on the 3′ 6″ gauge railway with its severe grades and sharp curves. Consideration was given to the improvement of the existing railway to handle efficiently the large quantities of coal, and to the alternative of building a new railway.

It was decided to construct a standard gauge railway on a new alignment west of the Flinders Range commencing at Stirling North (4 miles from Port Augusta).

Work on the new railway commenced in August, 1951, and during the progress of construction the decision was made to extend the standard gauge to Marree. The rails reached Brachina on 28th May, 1955; Telford in May, 1956, and Marree on 29th June, 1957.

The new railway was officially opened on 27th July, 1957, but prior to that "pick-a-back" working had been introduced between Brachina and Port Augusta on 4th June, 1955, and transport of Leigh Creek coal by standard gauge throughout on 26th June, 1956.

When Marree became established as the transfer point from standard gauge to 3′ 6″ gauge, the section of 3′ 6″ gauge railway between Hawker and Marree was closed. The section of 3′ 6″ gauge railway between Stirling North and Hawker remains, but there are no regular train services between Stirling North and Quorn and only a limited service between Quorn and Hawker.

The Central Australia Railway today comprises a standard gauge railway Stirling North to Marree (217 miles), a 3′ 6″ gauge railway Marree to Alice Springs (540 miles) and a 3′ 6″ gauge railway Stirling North to Hawker (61 miles).

North Australia Railway: The Darwin to Pine Creek Railway was constructed under contract for the South Australian Government. It is the only railway in Australia on which coolie labour was employed. The contractors, as permitted by their contract, imported some 300 Chinese and 150 Singalese and Indians, without any obligation to return them to their home countries. In all, some 3,000 Chinese worked on the line, the greater number, seemingly, in 1887.

To relieve unemployment, clearing and grubbing for formation of earth-works began in 1885, and active work by the contractors began in 1887. The section of the railway to Adelaide River (77 miles) was formally opened for traffic in June, 1888. The railway was completed to Pine Creek and taken over by the Government on 1st October, 1889. Subsequently, an iron jetty, connected to the railway, was built at Darwin.

Extension of the railway from Pine Creek to Katherine River, some 54½ miles, was authorised by the Pine Creek-Katherine River Railway Act 1913. In 1914, the then Engineer-in-Chief of Commonwealth Railways was directed to take in hand the work of building the line. The work was carried out under a combination of day labour, piece-work and small contracts. The railway was completed to Emungalan on the north bank of the Katherine River and opened for public traffic on 13th May, 1917.

Extension of the railway Emungalan to Mataranka (65 miles) — was completed in 1928, and from Mataranka to Birdum (52 miles) in 1929. The Enabling Act (Northern Territory Railway Extension Act No. 11 of 1923) provided for the line to be extended to Daly Waters, a further 44 miles, but owing to the financial situation at the time work stopped when the railhead reached Birdum — 316 miles from Darwin.

Right: The "Coffee Pot". This quaint steam rail motor went into service between Quorn and Port Augusta in 1906. It is now on display at Alice Springs station.

Below: The Official Opening of the Darwin-Pine Creek Railway on 1st October, 1889.

The co-ordinated rail-road-rail freight service carries a variety of commodities in transit from the Southern States to the Northern Territory. Containers loaded with dry goods and perishables, motor spirit in bulk and motor vehicles are all included.

THE STUART AND BARKLY HIGHWAYS

Alice Springs, the northern terminal of the Central Australia Railway. and Larrimah, the operative railhead of the North Australia Railway. which are 622 miles apart, are linked by the Stuart Highway which extends from Alice Springs to Darwin. The Barkly Highway from Mt. Isa joins the Stuart Highway 15 miles north of Tennant Creek.
A co-ordinated rail-road-rail freight service is provided between the Southern States and Darwin and intermediate stations on the North Australia Railway. Goods are conveyed to Alice Springs by train, and thence to Larrimah by a road haulier operating under contract to Commonwealth Railways. At Larrimah, goods are transferred to rail for transport to destination stations on the North Australia Railway.

A similar service is provided for freight consigned to Mt. Isa and other Western Queensland destinations, the goods being conveyed beyond Alice Springs by the road operator.

Regular road passenger services between Alice Springs and Darwin are available and these connect with the Central Australia Railway passenger service in both directions. Further information may be obtained from Tourist Bureaux.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Sleeping Accommodation: First and second class sleeping berths may be reserved twelve (12) calendar months in advance. Return tickets are issued and return accommodation may be booked when arranging the forward journey.

Separate sleeping accommodation is not provided for any child being carried free. One child between four and fourteen years of age may, in addition to another child under four, occupy a sleeping berth with parent or guardian without payment of any additional sleeping berth charge.

One child between four and fourteen years of age may occupy a separate sleeping berth and will be charged at the ordinary fare for such berth. Two children between four and fourteen years of age may occupy, and will be charged for, one sleeping berth, provided they have paid appropriate rail fares for the journey being undertaken.

Meals: First-class catering is provided en route. Dining cars are attached to trains between Port Pirie and Alice Springs. Tickets purchased by through passengers travelling between Port Pirie, Port Augusta or Marree and Alice Springs include sleeping berth and meal charges.

Timetable Leaflet: The Central Australia Railway timetable leaflet, containing details of the timetable and fares between Adelaide and Alice Springs is available at all tourist bureaux and railway interstate booking offices.

Send a Souvenir Booklet to your Friends: Passengers who so desire may have a copy of this booklet posted to friends. The conductor will, on request, make the necessary arrangements.

"Drive Yourself" Car Service: Passengers travelling between Adelaide and Alice Springs may arrange to have a "rent-a-car" available for use on arrival at their destination.

Enquiries concerning bookings can be made when tickets for the rail journey are being taken out.

Freighting of Motor Vehicles: A passenger who wishes to use his own motor vehicle for touring North Australia or Central Australia, can make arrangements for conveyance of his private motor vehicle over the Central Australia Railway between either Port Augusta or Marree and Alice Springs. Motor vehicles are carried at Owner's Risk.

Full details will be supplied on application to any of the following Commonwealth Railways offices:

Secretary, Commonwealth Railways, 325 Collins Street, Melbourne, Vic., 3000. (Telephone 62 5911).

Commonwealth Railways Representative, Room 8, Eighth Floor, Challis House, 10 Martin Place, Sydney, N.S.W., 2000. (Telephone 25 3139).

Commonwealth Railways Representative, Railway Station, Adelaide, S.A., 5000. (Telephone 51 2381).

Commonwealth Railways Representative, Room 6, First Floor, Padbury Buildings, Forrest Place, Perth, W.A., 6000. (Telephone 23 4918).

Chief Traffic Manager, Commonwealth Railways, Port Augusta, S.A., 5700. (Telephone 2253).

Stationmaster, Railway Station, Alice Springs, N.T., 5750. (Telephone 2 1011).

Manager, North Australia Railway, Darwin, N.T., 5790. (Telephone 2939).

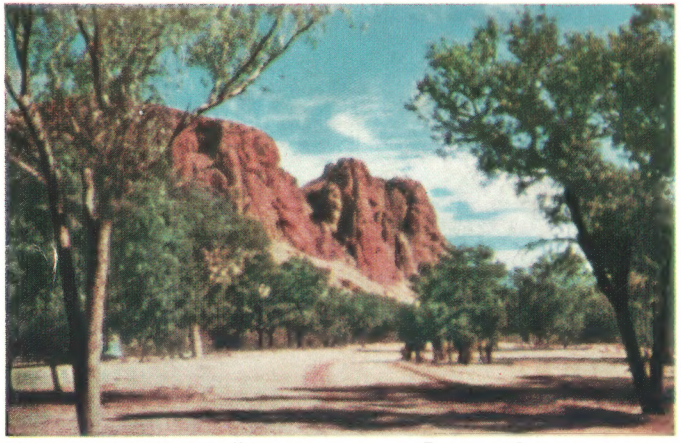
The "Sandfly" was placed in service on the North Australia Railway in 1887. It is now preserved at Port Augusta station.

SEE THESE EXCITING PLACES

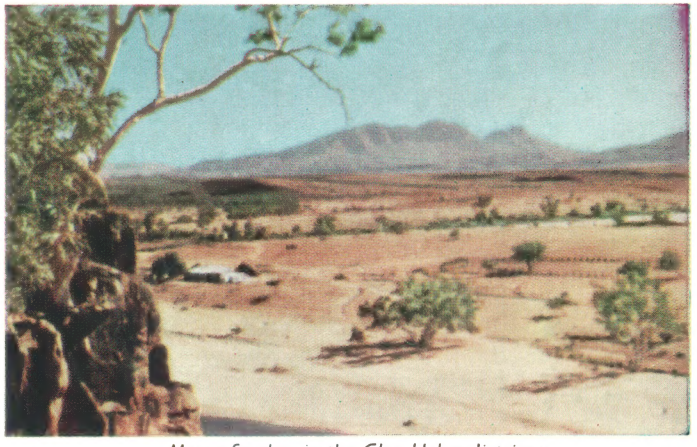
Kings Canyon—a striking rock formation south-west of Alice Springs

Palm Valley—an oasis in the Centre

WHY NOT VISIT CENTRAL AUSTRALIA OR THE NORTHERN TERRITORY NEXT WINTER



Trephina Bluff, at the entrance to Trephina Gorge



Mount Sonder, in the Glen Helen district

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